

**MINUTES OF THE  
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2008**

At a meeting of the **Planning and Economic Development Committee**, held Tuesday, February 5, 2008, in the Board Room, on the 9<sup>th</sup> Floor of the Administration Building, Mount Clemens, the following members were present:

Vosburg-Chair, Brdak, Camphous-Peterson, DeSaele, DiMaria, Drolet, Duzyj, Gielegem, Mijac, Rengert, Roberts and Crouchman (ex-officio).

Absent and excused were Brown and Haggerty.

**Other Commissioners Also Present:**

Commissioner Lund

There being a quorum of the committee present, Chair Vosburg called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**AGENDA**

**MOTION**

A motion was made by Duzyj, supported by Rengert, to adopt the agenda, as presented.  
**The Motion Carried.**

**MINUTES**

**MOTION**

A motion was made by Rengert, supported by Camphous-Peterson, to approve the November 6 and December 4, 2007 minutes of this committee, as written. **The Motion Carried.**

## **AUTHORIZE CONTINUATION OF MACOMB COUNTY SBTDC PROGRAM**

### **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION – MOTION**

A MOTION WAS MADE BY RENGERT, SUPPORTED BY DUZYJ, TO RECOMMEND THAT THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AUTHORIZE THE MACOMB COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO CONTINUE THE SMALL BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CENTER PROGRAM AND RENEW THE AGREEMENT WITH THE MICHIGAN SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER AT GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONTINUING TO PROVIDE BUSINESS ASSISTANCE SERVICES TO MACOMB COUNTY COMPANIES AND RESIDENTS. **THE MOTION CARRIED.**

### **RECEIVE AND FILE PRESENTATION ON PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT'S E-NEWSLETTER**

Ms. Maria Zardis gave a PowerPoint presentation on eMacomb - Business Matters. Key topics: Planning and Economic Development (PED) Defining Business + Life, Macomb / Business Matters (Featured Articles, Q & A, Groundbreaking News, Progress Thru Partnerships, Spotlight on Business, Economic Development in Action, Redevelopment News, Upcoming Events), January 2008 - 1,015 Newsletters Sent, Feedback, and Benefits of Electronic Newsletter vs. Traditional Printed. She logged onto the PED Web site and walked commissioners through how they would get to the E-Newsletter.

After the presentation, questions were directed to Ms. Zardis.

### **MOTION**

A motion was made by Duzyj, supported by Camphous-Peterson, to receive and file the presentation on the Planning and Economic Development Department's E-Newsletter. **The Motion Carried.**

### **RECEIVE AND FILE DEPARTMENTAL REPORT**

Mr. Cassin received word from Congressman Sander Levin's Office that the county has received an earmark from the Federal government of \$282,000 for a business incubator accelerator. Secondly, the Lobbyist informed him of a supplemental House appropriation request for \$500,000 to help fund this facility. Thirdly, as part of this, they have requested the Lobbyist to begin working on the possibility of creating a Smart Zone District in Macomb County at a location to be determined later. This would be the first Smart Zone and the first incubator in Macomb County.

He noted that this is unrelated, but yesterday they met with General Dynamics and they are

looking to expand facilities in both Shelby Township and Sterling Heights. He believed they will be successful in bringing in an additional \$7 million of investment in those communities and up to 300 more jobs.

He informed commissioners about four upcoming symposiums: Doing Business in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century on February 27<sup>th</sup>, Leadership Macomb Economy Day which he believed will be held in March, American Manufacturing Transition on April 29<sup>th</sup>, and New Markets Through Exporting on May 13<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioners asked Mr. Cassin if he knew the criteria that will be used in determining the business incubator and Smart Zone sites.

A discussion ensued with Mr. Cassin about the Convention Center that is being proposed in Chesterfield by three named individuals. Mr. Cassin stated that there were tax advantages given to the Novi Rock Financial Center and the legislation was written in, he believed, that it had to be 200,000 square feet or more. The facility in Chesterfield is going to be 100,000 to 125,000 square feet. These individuals have been contacting their legislators to see if they can get the legislation revised to allow a smaller threshold and that is another thing that our Lobbyists will be looking at.

### **MOTION**

A motion was made by Camphous-Peterson, supported by Rengert, to receive and file the Departmental Report from Mr. Stephen Cassin, Executive Director, Planning and Economic Development Department. **The Motion Carried.**

### **RECEIVE AND FILE PRESENTATION FROM JOHN HERTEL ON REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVE**

Mr. John Hertel, CEO, Detroit Regional Mass Transit, took on the responsibility of planning a Regional Transit System. They spent the first year creating a Federal Vision document. In order for them to turn it in to the Federal government, that document had to be approved unanimously by the members of the Regional Transit Coordinating Council (RTCC), who met last August and voted unanimously to approve it. The Federal government said that they qualify now for \$1 million in planning money.

Now, they are into actually doing the real plan and all of its detail. The Federal government said that his staff was too small. They have to use this money to hire a professional corporation to come in and act as a consulting firm, along with his staff. During the fall they had different companies come in and provide bids and qualifying evidence as to their qualifications for doing this plan. In November, the bids were opened and the lowest qualifying bid in terms of the lowest amount of money was then placed again (just before Christmas) in front of the three leaders of the three counties and the Mayor of Detroit at a

public meeting. They voted unanimously. Mr. Hertel stated that a company by the name of Trans Systems has been hired to work with his staff to create this specific regional plan and all of its detail. He pointed out that by this time next year, they have to have the actual plan ready to present to the Board of the RTCC.

Mr. Hertel stated that while they are in this planning process, they are urging everyone who would like to have input to either meet with their staff or have him go out and meet with individuals. He has already met with mayors and supervisors of 50 different communities. There are 132 separate communities in these three counties.

He informed commissioners that Denver has just put in the newest system in the country. That system is spread over five counties; there are 31 separate cities and townships. They have trolleys, light-rail, high-speed buses, and commuter rail. They have a local sales tax in those five counties to pay for it.

He pointed out that in the Top 20 metropolitan areas in population in this country, we rank No. 10 in density. All 19 of those other communities have mass transit systems. In the Top 30 major metropolitan areas in this country, 29 of them either have mass transit systems in place or are constructing their mass transit systems. We are the only one that does not have one in place or are not constructing it.

He noted that according to the University of Detroit, they tell them that objectively in the last 20 years in this country for every dollar that was put into mass transit by government, surrounding that mass transit has been an average investment of \$8.50 by private developers. He recently met with the new Dean of Engineering at Lawrence Tech to seek out their help. He has met with the Transit Union workers twice.

## **MOTION**

A motion was made by Roberts, supported by Camphous-Peterson, to receive and file the presentation from John Hertel on the Regional Transportation Initiative.

Mr. Hertel spoke about how the RTCC differs from DARTA. Inquiry was made if there is a role for SEMCOG in this. During discussion, Mr. Hertel felt that the best part of mass transit in the entire state is SMART in Macomb and that is because we are the only county that does not allow an opt out. And, that is what the problem is in both Oakland County and in Wayne County, they allowed opt outs.

Inquiry was made as to the Federal Vision document and what corridors they are looking at within Macomb County. Mr. Hertel said that they put down all the possible corridors. In Macomb County, they listed Gratiot, Metropolitan Parkway, and M-59. They had other corridors in there for smaller line-haul buses and so forth.

Inquiry was made as to what will happen to SMART or how Mr. Hertel envisions how SMART will fit into this. Mr. Hertel said what they are trying to do is simultaneously while creating the plan, urge SMART and DDOT to do as much inter-planning in terms of how they are operating their present systems. He felt we need to improve the system as much as possible now, so they are using Trans Systems to help do that, too.

Mr. Hertel believed that ultimately when they do a Regional System, that there should not be any opt outs. There should not be a DDOT, a SMART, or a People Mover. There should be one complete unified Regional System.

Inquiry was made as to how well Mr. Hertel has been received by local municipalities. Mr. Hertel said for the ones he has been to that about 80-some percent have been very supportive. The problem is, they have sent out two different letters to 132 mayors and supervisors, and they have only received responses from about 60 of them. He noted that he has had all three (auto) corporations come forward, without him asking, and offer help in doing this mass transit system.

Mr. Hertel indicated that Board Chair Crouchman has worked very well with the other three leaders on the RTCC to create a cooperative atmosphere. He thanked Mr. Diegel and his staff, as well as the Planning and Economic Development Department, because on a number of occasions when they needed information about Macomb County it has been provided to them very quickly. He informed commissioners that he can be reached at 313-393-3333.

Chair Vosburg called for a vote on the motion and **The Motion Carried.**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Vosburg adjourned the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

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**Denise M. Jacks**  
**Committee Reporter**